

FEBRUARY 1923

# Labor Age

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MINNESOTA — Star of the North  
'The Other' Side of "Main Street"



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Presenting all the facts about American labor—Believing that the goal of the American labor movement lies in industry for service, with workers' control.

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## HATS OFF TO GOPHERDOM!

OUT of the Northwest has come a story of real achievement. In Minnesota they are DOING things, not merely talking about them.

In almost every advanced branch of labor activity, workers are blazing the way. Perhaps it is part of that pioneering instinct which sent their ancestors to that wonderful country—with its thousand inland lakes and its rich lands that make it "the Granary of the World."

These efforts are still young. They have come out of the "Open Shop" attack on Labor. Most of them are not two years old. And yet, they are so well founded on correct principles and have back of them such a live and fighting movement that their permanency is assured.

Certainly, their success in meeting the "Open Shop-pers" and putting the fear of the Lord into them, makes these efforts worthy of the attention of the whole American Labor Movement. They might be well duplicated in other places.

LABOR AGE wants this big message of Gopher Labor to get across to as wide an audience as possible. For that purpose we have arranged with one of the big photo-distributing agencies that, at the same time that this issue is printed, there shall be released to rotogravure and picture sections of newspapers throughout the country this inspiring story of what Minnesota is doing. May it lead to a renewed offensive on the Profit Makers!

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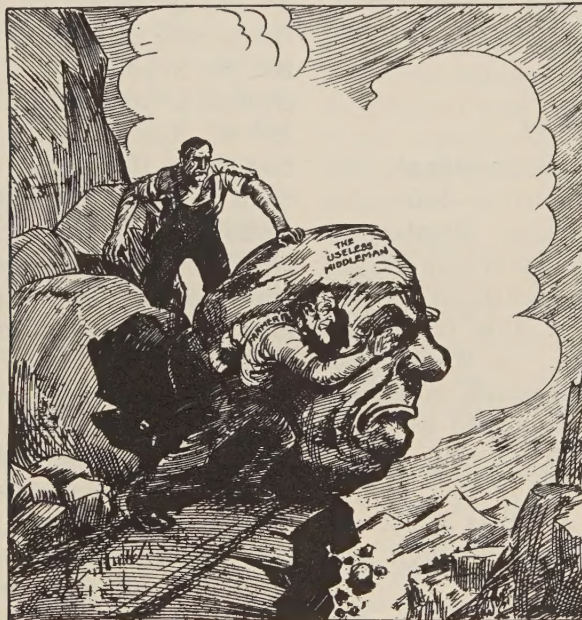


## Minnesota—Star of the North

*The Other Side of "Main Street": Farmer-Labor*

By THOMAS VAN LEAR

WHAT  
IT  
ALL  
MEANS



"The National  
Leader"—organ of  
Non-Partisan  
League—  
thus pictures  
New Alliance

ON THE great seal of the State of Minnesota appear the words, "L'étoile du Nord." Their meaning: "Star of the North."

Labor men who have visited the Northwest of late tell us that our state is beginning to deserve this name. In the things that it is doing, it has become for certain sections of the movement at least a Northern Star—to lead them out of the wilderness of reaction.

Many folks who had known nothing of the battle that has been going on for years in this country of grain, lumber and iron ore mines, awoke with a start on last November 8th at what had happened to Minnesota's seat in the United States Senate. Who represents that state there? Knut Nelson, it is true—the -nth degree of Con-

servatism. But beside him now sits Henrik Shipstead, St. Paul dentist, the first independent Farmer-Labor member of that body. Both old parties had been bowled over by the alliance of fighting farmers and workingmen. And the Farmer-Labor candidate for Governor had escaped election only by a few thousand votes.

That was only one item in the Gopher labor movement's achievements—the one that got into the headlines of the daily press all over the country. It was merely an indication of the many other things that have been accomplished, things of less publicity value than the election of a Senator but of as much, if not more importance to the workers themselves.

Two years ago four men active in the Minneapolis Central Trades and Labor Assembly went



## LABOR AGE

to jail. Their offence was that they had defied an injunction. That seems to be a pretty good way to defeat labor injunctions. These men were accompanied to jail by over 6000 labor men and women. Their imprisonment was considered by these men and women a mark of honor. As they entered the court-house, they made farewell speeches to this great crowd of people, and were cheered to the echo. It was a fine picture of a fighting movement. Today one of these men—Lynn Thompson—has again entered the court-house. This time he goes in as county commissioner! What is better, two other labor men go in with him, which means that Labor has control of Hennepin County, the largest county in the state. These men have gone into office not as the representatives of any one section of the movement. They are Labor candidates, standing for the whole of local Organized Labor.

### 77 Per Cent Organized

That is a picture of what is taking place all over the state, and in all lines of activity—industrial and cooperative as well as political. Members of Organized Labor in Minnesota constitute 77 per cent of the total wage earning population. When you see what the figures are in other states you will see just what this means. In Washington the workers are 68 per cent organized, in Massachusetts 48 per cent, West Virginia 45 per cent, Oregon 38 per cent, Kansas 33 per cent, North Dakota 32 per cent. I have no further figures than these; but it is safe to say that Minnesota is far up among the leaders with its high percentage of unionized workers.

In cooperation the Gopher movement is also in the van. When the "Open Shop" fight began up here the workers did not rest content to hold their own forts. They went right after the other fellow, to beat him at his own game. Today, in the Twin Cities, you can clothe yourself, build your house, get your meals, bank your savings, buy your milk and cigars, have your laundry done, secure your daily newspaper, and even insure yourself—all through the union cooperative movement.

Our organizations have become breeding places for the cooperative. This is as it should be. The greater part of organizing work, we feel, should be put into the formation and development of the unions. They always come first. Then, out of the unions should come the cooperatives. This gives the cooperative a union background, and it also complies with union rules and principles.

It also means that men not of the union, who are drawn to the cooperative because of its great advantages, receive union training from the cooperative and learn the message of unionism. It is thus easy to get such men to join labor organizations.

### What Happened

Twenty-five years ago there was no difference between this Minnesota labor movement and that of any other state. At that time there was no cooperation or alliance between the farmers and workers. Each believed that the other was a "bad, bad man"—having been told this by their common exploiters. It is hardly necessary to say that the movement at that time, as a movement, took little interest in politics. The leaders usually divided up—a portion of them on one side for the Democratic candidates and a portion on the other, for the Republicans. Then, whichever side was elected, a few of the leaders would get appointments. Usually not to very good jobs, but satisfactory to them. No benefit came to the movement itself out of the elections. None of its principles were agreed to, or even talked about, as a rule, during the campaign. Often a labor leader, appointed to office, found himself part of an administration persecuting the very movement that he had led.

"What good can come out of this?" the workers inquired. The answer: That the rank and file must persuade their leaders to give up going after offices and get down to a fight on principles. The State Federation, also, at the same time invited the farmers and the churches to cooperate with them by sending fraternal delegates to the annual labor conventions. This paved the way, at least, for alliance with the farmers. The farmers were not organized politically then; but they were organized in granges, for their economic welfare. Many of their leaders who came to the State Federation gatherings were old time Populists. They belonged to cooperative societies and "equity" organizations, and told the workers of the advantages of cooperation.

### "Cooperative Measles"

It is these men of the soil that are largely responsible for the spirit of cooperation that prevails in the labor movement of Minnesota today. Long before the workers had thought of the control of their jobs through cooperative machinery, the farmers had turned to it in their battles with the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber's allies. Over half of



our people live in the country—56 per cent, to be exact. There are 190,000 farmers in Gopherdom—compared to 20,000 lumber workers, 17,000 iron miners, and 10,000 car shop workers—the three largest industries. These farmers, as with their brothers all through the Northwest, have been cheated and defrauded by the Minneapolis grain elevator and milling interests.

In answer, cooperative institutions of all kinds sprang up in the farm country. If you were to mark a map of Minnesota with black dots for each cooperative creamery in the state, the map would look as though it had the measles. Over eight hundred of these creameries are in operation. As the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Minnesota says in its August 1919 bulletin, "There can be no doubt as to the success of cooperative creameries in Minnesota. No other state has so many or so large a percentage of cooperative creameries as Minnesota. In the great dairy state of Wisconsin, only 45.5 per cent of the creameries are cooperative"—while in Minnesota 76.4 per cent are under cooperative control. Hundreds of farmers' elevators, livestock shipping associations, general stores, farmers' mutual insurance companies, farmers' mutual telephone companies—are under operation under cooperative plans. In fact, Minnesota leads all the other states in farmers' cooperation. Is it any surprise, then, that Organized Labor here should become a pioneer in union cooperation?

With the workers taking a lesson from the farmer in cooperation, the latter took a lesson from us in political activity. The spirit of independent political action along working class lines, which had made great headway in the cities, spread to the country districts. There the propaganda grew. Through the visits back and forth to conventions of farmers and workers, the great opportunity for united effort became plainer and plainer to both sides. They both were attacked by the same enemy—the alliance of grain elevator, iron ore and railroad interests. (When one realizes that the iron ore mines are owned by U. S. Steel—the chief source of its raw material supply—and that the milling interests are the biggest in the country and hold the key to the whole Northwest, the strength of this enemy can be understood.) The old parties seemed to bask only in the sunshine of these interests' favor, and paid no heed to farmer or worker. That they have not changed this policy even now is seen in the appointment of Pierce Butler, attorney for many of these corporations, to the United States Supreme Court by

President Harding. Butler is a Democrat and Harding a Republican—but they both think alike on economic questions. **From this realization of the need for a producers' political alliance grew the Farmer-Labor Party—now the second party in the state.**

#### Main Street's Answer

The result of this three-fold action—industrial, cooperative, political—has been a greater solidarity of the people who toil. The union man builds up his cooperative and looks to it for help in time of trouble. It gives him credit, food in strikes, and a powerful weapon against the "open shop" enemy. The cooperative, on the other hand, having a union background, is in sympathy with the unions when trouble comes. Both of them see that if unions and cooperatives are to succeed, they need political control in order that unfair and unjust laws may not outlaw them. This binds the three organizations together in a brotherhood, that could not be cemented together in any other way.

By some peculiar accident, Minnesota has been made famous recently as the home of Sinclair Lewis' widely read novel, "Main Street." Perhaps the accident was Mr. Lewis' own birth there—for certain cynical and critical types revolt at the associations connected with their birthplaces. Of course, Minnesota has its "Main Street" spirits, just as it has some drab and dreary landscapes. But what are those monotonous snatches of scenery compared to the beautiful inland lakes, the long stretches of golden grain, the eternal sunshine and snow of winter, and the clear, invigorating air? And, what is the small spirit of a few—to be found in any state or section—compared to this big effort for more and more freedom? Is it not something that the theoreticians, critics and talkers can well think over?

This labor movement of ours is industrial first, cooperative next, and political last. It has had a great and helpful influence on our people. They have their principles to defend, their cooperative business to protect, and their political movement to promote in defense of their other institutions. This requires judgment, foresight, good business methods and at the same time, vision and idealism.

That is the reason that the movement in Minnesota, as a labor movement, has become more full grown than in many other places. It has accepted its responsibilities in every field of endeavor. Best of all, it is making good.



# From An Idea

*To a \$1,000,000 Institution in 3 Years*

By EDWARD SOLEM



*Underwood & Underwood*

## A PRODUCT OF THE "OPEN SHOP" FIGHT

This is the little "present" the Union Milk Drivers handed the employers! Herewith runs the story of how it all happened.

**J**ACK'S fast-growing beanstalk has a 20th century duplicate. It is the Franklin Co-operative Creamery of Minneapolis. From a mere idea three years ago, it has grown to a \$1,000,000 concern—the largest creamery and milk distributing establishment in the Northwest.

If a stranger, with no other means of knowing about the creamery, had merely attended each of our annual meetings, he would have been a witness to the Franklin's growth. In that small beginning three years ago, 13 of us met in a back room on Western Avenue. Two years ago we were 300, assembled at Richmond Halls. One year ago we crowded the assembly room of the Court House, and this January it was the Minneapolis Auditorium—the largest meeting place in our city—that had to be secured for this annual gathering.

The business done during the year just closed, according to the report given at this last meeting, amounts to \$1,674,479.12. The net earnings were \$104,432.23. After payments on the investment and a 5 per cent return to the consumers, 25 per cent of these earnings were set aside for a reserve fund and 1 per cent for educational purposes. We believe strongly in education—both for the consuming public and those working for the cooperative concern. It is the foundation stone of successful cooperation.

## 'The "Open Shop" Did It

No wonder, you will agree, that the private dealers are getting nervous! It was their attack on Organized Labor in the first place that was responsible for the Cooperative Creamery. They had decided on the so-called "Open Shop" for their



milk drivers. But the drivers decided otherwise. The 13 at that first meeting—active spirits in the Union, asked themselves: "If the employer attacks us, why can't we attack him? Why should not the workers run their own business, jointly with the consumers?" These questions were fair ones, and the answer has more than justified their hopes. **1922 has seen the Union come back stronger than ever in Minneapolis.** The same distributors who two years ago swore that they would never have another Union man on their pay roll, demanding that a driver sign a "yellow dog contract" before he could go to work for them, today are telling their men "to get into the Union or get off the job."

It must be remembered that the business done last year was practically all done at the south side plant—where the creamery started. A new and much larger plant—on the north side—was opened for business just before the close of the year. With but one exception, in fact, this new plant is the largest co-operative creamery plant in the world. The Union Construction Company, which erected this building, is also a result of the open shop fight. Our building was their first big job. As it stands today it is a credit to their efficiency. The Building Trades, they have shown, can carry on building operations on a big scale, successfully, without the need of the boss—to reap the biggest part of the returns.

#### For the Health of the People

This new plant is not what the average reader may think: Simply a milk plant where large cans come rustling in at one end and rattling bottles go out at the other. It is an interesting sight—and an education—to go through the building and see how every precaution is taken to safeguard the people's health. The milk is brought in in glass-lined tanks—each tank of 1,300-gallon capacity. When it reaches our plant it is put into other glass lined tanks of 100-gallon capacity. Samples are taken by the chemist. The milk is then pasteurized in white enameled holders and held for 30 minutes, cooled down to 38 degrees and poured by white enameled automatic fillers into bottles, sterilized and shiny as crystal. All of this machinery is the last word known in the dairy machinery world.

But the builders of this modern milk plant knew that man is not in this world only to work. He is also supposed to play. They therefore provided an auditorium with a stage and a seating capacity of 800—where plays and concerts are given by and

for the employees and stockholders. There the monthly meetings are held. A cafeteria—where 75 persons may enjoy their hot noon-day lunch at one time—is to be found in the basement. There are dressing rooms with individual lockers and shower baths for the male workers—who are largely drivers. For the women a special rest room is provided.

#### The Price War

To offset our great progress, the chief competitors of the Franklin during the last year formed a combination. As with all the moves of these people, this has worked to the advantage of the cooperative. As a youngster, only a month old, this combination started to raise particular cain, and like other youngsters it had to be taught a lesson.

It happened in this way: the farmers' organization, which sells to all the city milk distributors, announced a raise of one cent per quart in the price, effective December 1. Accordingly, we informed our patrons that we were compelled to raise our price from 11 to 12 cents per quart on that date. Every distributor in St. Paul did the same. The Clover Leaf Creamery, which is the largest independent company in Minneapolis, had notices ready, announcing the new price, but was advised not to distribute them.

No one could learn what the new combination—the Northland Company—was going to do. There was only one man in this concern of a dozen officials who knew, and that man could not be found until he came out of the woods on Thanksgiving Day.

Then came the announcement! "Keeping faith with the public," it began, and it was published in all the Minneapolis newspapers. It stated that "Northland milk was to remain at 11 cents per quart."

It did not take us long to realize the true intent of this move. The Northland believed the time opportune to put the finishing touches to the Franklin Co-operative just as we opened our new plant. But in 24 hours the tables had turned.

Here is how it happened! The next evening after the announcement, we had a general meeting of all the employees. After the declaration of war was thoroughly discussed, a motion was made that we work for "strike pay" until the war was over. A ballot vote was taken. It was unanimous "Yes"—or, as one of the boys said: "1000 per cent Yes." This was the answer the employees of the Franklin gave to the "price war" declaration of the Northland Company:



"To the People of Minneapolis:

"Locked out by those gentlemen who are now officials of the Northland Company, we walked the streets of Minneapolis to establish the Franklin Co-operative. We shall sacrifice our wages to maintain and protect it.

"The Northland Company claims they are going to give you the benefit of their savings—we can do better than that. **You shall not only have the benefit of our savings, but of our sacrifice as well.** From now on you shall have Franklin milk at 10 cents per quart."

#### Victory!

No combination could meet such competition. The price war was brought into every home in the city. The telephone girls at our plants were unable to handle the new orders, so fast did they come in. The officials of the Northland were not long in waking up to the fact that of all their blunders, this was the greatest. They immediately put out peace feelers, asking for an armistice. In four days the war was over. In order to affect the settlement, the farmers' organization came down one-half cent per quart in their price. This made it possible for us to distribute milk at 11 cents again.

#### Purity and Prices—Past and Present

What the consuming public is most concerned about is the effect that the cooperative has had on the quality of the city's milk supply. The following testimony from Dr. F. E. Harrington, City Health Commissioner, in the **Minneapolis Tribune** of October 8, 1922, tells the story:

"No city in the United States compared with Minneapolis has a safer milk supply. The milk supply of Minneapolis has improved 200 per cent in quality in the last two years, and the consumption has increased 75 per cent."

That is not all. Not only did the quality of the milk improve, but during the same period it came down in price from 13 and 14 cents per quart to the present figure. This in spite of the fact that the farmers supplying the Twin Cities are receiving comparatively more for their milk than milk producers in any other part of this country. What this means to our city in added health and happiness can hardly be estimated. The Franklin Cooperative has not only saved money for the people of Minneapolis—it has saved children's lives as well.

While we have been busy building, we have built no fence around our institution. Wherever

we could give any moral support or practical advice we have done so cheerfully, realizing that our growth and success may be a source of inspiration for others. The common people of the city of Cleveland are blessing the name of the Franklin Cooperative. The City Cooperative Dairy of Cleveland, Ohio, was organized under the same circumstances as the Franklin Cooperative and can truly be said to be a child of our own institution. We have given them, not only our moral support and advice, and sent our president and manager to assist them; but financial aid in the form of loans as well.

Our plant will also house a summer school in cooperation this year. Through the encouragement of the Cooperative League of America, this school is being undertaken by the Northern States Cooperative League—a union of Minnesota and Wisconsin cooperatives. Executives will here be trained for cooperative work. Lectures will also be held for the general public.

#### It Can Be Done Anywhere!

There is nothing mysterious about our success. What we have done, others CAN DO. The possible as well as the impossible exists largely in people's minds.

Out here in our North Star State nothing is impossible anymore. Over 50 per cent of all the farm products of our state are marketed through cooperative organizations. And the city people are fast becoming the masters of their own destiny by meeting the folks from the farms at the city gate. **Soon, the toll-taker will have to earn his living by honest work.**

Do you recall the old story of the commission merchant, the two pigs and two suits? As a reward for meddling with the producer on the farm and the city dweller—acting as a go-between—the commission merchant found himself the possessor of both a pig and a suit. The farmer, on the other hand, only had a suit at the end of the deal and no pig. The tailor had only a pig and no suit. Yet, it was the tailor and the farmer who had done the work and made all the pigs and all the suits possible. That story is not popular anymore in the Northwest. We have punctured it—and made it a fiction.

"Industrial peace through cooperation. It is a possibility. Industrial victory for the workers through cooperation. It is a reality." That is the message from 6,000 stockholders, 35,000 patrons and 300 loyal, 100 per cent union employees of the Franklin Cooperative Association of Minnesota.



# Cooperation Everywhere!

## *The Twin Cities Steal A March on Big Business*

By LESLIE SINTON

**D**URING the last two years a stirring movie picture has been "on" in the Twin Cities. The role of villain has been played—with much gusto—by the "Open Shop Gang," creature of the Steel Trust and its banking comrades. When the show began, the villain was having all the best of it. A happy leer was on his face. His newspapers chortled with glee. He thought that he was about to strangle Organized Labor.

Today the scene has changed. Labor is pummeling its enemy. The hard fight is gradually becoming a victory for the workers. The villain is more sober now. A crape is on his face. He is down—and almost out.

The reasons for this? There are many of them. The villain was, and is, stupid. Organized Labor is strong—industrially and politically. It was able to put up a real resistance. But the most striking reason of all, no doubt, was the coming of the Cooperatives to the help of the Movement. That is particularly true of certain branches of industry. The villain found himself attacked from the rear as well as from the front. It took the heart out of him.

When 15,000 persons gathered in Columbia Park, Minneapolis, on August 20th last, for the first annual picnic of the Franklin Cooperative Creamery, notice was given to those who did not hitherto know it, that something big and new was taking place. As the **Minnesota Daily Star** stated, "The spontaneous outpouring of 15,000 persons to celebrate a cooperative triumph is an event in America." That city almost overnight had become one of the cooperative centers of the country. Wherever possible, Labor is going into group business for itself—on a 100 per cent union basis.

### **The Cooks Take a Hand**

Let us call the roll of these new ventures, in which Labor is teaching the other fellow a few tricks. No. 1 is the Franklin Cooperative Creamery, whose story is already told. No. 2 is the Cooks' Restaurant Association. Walk down Marquette Avenue to the 300 block any day that you happen to be in the "Miller City," and you will see what the employers in the culinary trades have helped their employes to do. It all took place in May of last year. The employers were

set on putting the workers—cooks and waiters—out of business. "The union was to be put off the map." With the example of the other cooperative beginnings before them, the culinary workers countered with a restaurant of their own. Members of the local waitresses' union were given employment there. It was the means of keeping them in line while the battle raged against them.

The restaurant has been popular with the working people from the start. It has made a special effort to give the sort of service that would appeal to them. From the very beginning its governing board decided that it would not merely make a bid for custom based on the fact that it is a cooperative concern, but also that it would build up its trade on good service. A special plate dinner at the nominal price of 25 cents is one of its features.

During this first year of its existence the restaurant has not been able to pay dividends. But it has done a business of over \$100.00 per day; and has been able to pay off the notes which it assumed in purchasing its present plant. Next year it will not be impeded with this debt, and can make even greater strides. Indeed, the success which it has attained has encouraged the cooks' union to plan a series of chain restaurants on a cooperative basis. Who can tell—perhaps the unions may evolve their own local cooperative chain stores in all lines, to fight the chain stores of the Interests? That, of course, is still only a hope. But hopes, when wished hard enough, have a queer way of coming true. We in the Northwest have seen them come true!

### **Food and Shelter**

"If you have a union cooperative restaurant, how can you escape having a union meat and provision company? Well, we haven't escaped. The Star Meat and Provision Company is on the job, a cooperative conducted by the Meat Cutters' Union. The old song is sung here again: "The bosses turned the trick." They forced the formation of the cooperative through a lockout of the meat cutters, back in 1919. It is, therefore, one of the oldest of the local union undertakings.

It is also one of the most successful. Last year it paid a 7 per cent dividend to shareholders, and



a 5 per cent dividend to patrons. It conducts two fine stores—one in the so-called "down town district" and one near the state university. Each of these stores contains grocery and bakery departments, manned by union bakers and union clerks. **Does it look as though a boss is needed to run this business?** These workers would laugh at the idea. And yet, only a few years ago they did not realize their power!

The food industries are close pressed in the co-operative race by the building industry. The Union Construction Company made its bow to the public less than a year ago. It paid on January 1st, 10 per cent dividends. These resulted from its splendid piece of work on the new Franklin Cooperative Association plant and garage, and erection of a number of small houses, and a good deal of general repair work. It has just landed a big repair job in the heart of the city, in competition with private concerns. The former business agent of the Carpenters' Union is president of the construction company. Its estimator and architect is also a member of the Carpenters' Union (Local Union No. 7)—in good standing. He was with the City Building Inspector's office for a number of years. To him, of course, the success of the venture is largely due. It may be added that the company is capitalized at \$100,000—stock being sold at \$25.00 per share. The company gives this guarantee of good work, which has been scrupulously lived up to: "The unions being interested in this Construction Company will assure the builder that his building will be constructed by none other than the most skilled workmen in the trade."

### **Insurance—and a Union Board of Trade!**

Along with the construction company has gone a Union Building and Loan Association and a Union Insurance Company. "Service, Not Profit" is the slogan which appears on the literature of the former. It's specific job—to help the workers to buy their own homes. "Real success," it says, "for an institution of this kind is not determined by the amount of money it makes but by the number of people it aids to become home owners." The Union Insurance Company does not do a mutual insurance business, as might be supposed, but is engaged in insurance brokerage. It handles the insurance of the best companies, and also handles bonds for unions and business of that sort. In this way, **the labor organizations do not pay tribute to a private bondsman for the surety required of**

**their officers or for bail in strike times.** As a matter of economy, this should commend itself to unions in other sections of the country.

And here is another surprise which I have up my sleeve! To regulate the trade relations and trade practices of these concerns, and to aid them in their enterprises, the Hennepin County Union Board of Trade has come into existence. Differences may arise between these associations, overlapping may develop, sharp trade practices may creep in sometime, somewhere—unless this Board of Trade is on the job to see that these things are ironed out and kept straight. Other associations will have to be formed in the future for the benefit of the workers of Hennepin County. The Board of Trade is there, to see that these organizations do come into being to meet this need. Isn't this a pretty neat way, after all, to hammer at the enemies of labor, the Profit Makers, by building up labor organizations parallel to their own?

This is not the end of the roll. We now beg to present the Union Laundry and Cleaning Association and the Cooperative Cigar Company. Who controls the former? The Launderers and Cleaners Union, of course. Although the laundry is not yet one year old, it has acquired a new building of its own, where its main plant is located. In addition, it has a branch laundry in another part of the city. It has done \$16,000 worth of business in its first 7 months of being, and shows a loss of only \$61.69. This loss would have been a handsome profit, but for the heavy moving expenses incurred in taking up its new home. And against this wee loss it can show \$7,000 worth of the most up-to-date equipment for the laundry game. Both its delivery system and its work are as good as the best, which is setting a fast pace in such a ripping business.

All over the Twin Cities you can see the "C. C. C." cigar—on billboards and on cigar stands. The initials are the symbol of the Cooperative Cigar Company's product. A cigar factory—a union factory of 28 years standing—decided to change its labor policy, locked out its men, and the cooperatives came into being. Strange to say, it has not made the rapid progress of the other undertakings—although it is turning out a very good product and gradually coming into its own. It is a young child yet, and the good business sense of its manager promises constant growth—and success.



So much can also be said for another and unique cooperative. It is none other than the Women's Garment Association. A group of teachers started this association, because of their belief in cooperation. The factory is called the "Ronna Shop" and was opened in January, 1921. A manager has been employed, and, although there are only about 100 members in the association, it has made good from the start.

#### Of Course: A Newspaper and A Bank

How complete would such a host of cooperatives be without a labor newspaper and a labor bank? The newspaper has been ours for several

body is talking Cooperation," says its prospectus. "The Transportation Brotherhoods National Bank of Minneapolis is practicing Cooperation. The by-laws limit dividends on the capital stock to 10 per cent. The stockholders can never receive more than 10 per cent." Part of the balance goes to building up the bank, and the rest goes pro rata to the depositors. "In other words, the depositors of the bank are partners in the bank. They share in its earnings. That is one of the principles of Cooperation."

Neither the newspaper nor the bank are real cooperatives, in the sense that the other enterprises are. Votes in both are by amount of share-

"WE BELIEVE IN PROPERTY RIGHTS—THE WORKERS' PROPERTY!"



These are a few of the several hundred 100 per cent union milk drivers who own their own \$1,000,000 creamery. Also may be noted five of the dozens of distributing wagons owned by the same drivers. Every man in the Franklin plant is a union driver—from superintendent to barn chief. Can it be wondered that the "open shop" employers feel sick?

years—not strictly cooperative in the sense that these other businesses are—but carrying the message of labor and cooperation throughout the city. The story of the **Minnesota Daily Star** has been recited by Brother Van Lear, who knows it well, in the August LABOR AGE.

The bank has just come among us—the Transportation Brotherhoods National Bank. "Cooperation—Service" are its watchwords. It is part of that great system of banks which the rail unions—and the Locomotive Engineers in particular—are building up over the country. Warren S. Stone is its president, and it is officered otherwise by labor men and able bankers in whom we all can have confidence. "Every-

holdings, not one vote for each shareholder. However, the newspaper has been the means of obtaining otherwise impossible publicity and has loyally supported the movement. The bank will also be a help to the movement. State laws prevent it from being organized along true cooperative lines.

Why not go on and on, and finish the job of taking over enterprises for the workers by the workers in this way? That we can also do. For, so many obstacles have been overcome in the past two brief years, and so many hopes have been realized, that we are confident bigger things can be put across as completely and well.



# Minnesota's Political "Why"

*The Embattled Farmers Join Hands with Labor*

By H. G. TEIGAN

**O**F DR. HENRICK SHIPSTEAD—the sole Farmer-Labor Party Senator—the *Minnesota Daily Star* says: "The Farmer-Labor leader started as a farm boy and climbed by his own exertions to Mayor of Glenwood, and later to state lawmaker." He was a member of the legislature of 1917. His record, the *Star* says, "shows that he voted for iron ore taxation (against the Steel Trust); for temperance legislation; equal suffrage for women; for the bill prohibiting the injunction in labor cases, against the bill to restore the partisan legislature, and in favor of all important progressive measures and against all reactionary attempts." As an independent candidate for Governor in 1920, he polled 200,000 votes more than the Democratic candidate.



**M**ANY men pinched themselves on November 8th last—the day after election—to see if they were awake. "What is this that has happened—Minnesota selecting an independent Farmer-Labor Senator?" That was the "most unkindest cut of all" to Reaction on that "gloomy" day. For, Minnesota has been the headquarters for years of the grain elevator and milling interests, which have bled the farmers of the Northwest and allied themselves with other interests to bleed the workers.

Dr. Shipstead becomes the first member of the Senate in 20 years who claims allegiance to neither of the old parties. On March 4th next it will be just that long since the last of the Populist Senators surrendered his place to an old party man.

But Minnesota did more than elect an independent member of the United States Senate. The voters of the state also chose a member of the lower house of Congress from the Farmer-Labor ticket—Knud Wefald, who won in the Ninth District. They sent Reverend O. J. Kvale to the House of Representatives, though he was running as an "Independent." And when the smoke of battle had cleared away, there were twenty-six State Senators and forty-six House members elected with Farmer-Labor endorsement.

## Revolt Long Brewing

This revolt against the old parties is not as sudden an outburst as folks outside the Northwest may think. It has been brewing for years. The cry of "We'll stick," which swept North Dakota—putting Frazier, a dirt farmer, into the Governor's chair—spread to the other Northwest states, and entered Minnesota in 1916. The main movement for political freedom dates back to that year, with the coming of the National Non-Partisan

League. And back of the League were the Farmers' Alliance, the Populist Party, the Socialist Party, and several farmers' organizations.

It was in 1890 that S. M. Owen, Farmers' Alliance candidate for Governor, gave the old parties their first big scare, polling over 58,000 votes. Four years later Mr. Owen, as the Populist Party candidate, received almost 88,000 votes. That was the high-water mark for the Populists, who shortly afterward fused with the Democrats. The Socialist Party succeeded them as the party of insurgency, though it never grew to their strength.

Since the exit of the Farmers' Alliance and Populist movements, several farmers organizations have appeared on the scene. While these organizations were not primarily political they all found politics essential to their success. The most important of these farmers organizations is the American Society of Equity. The A. S. of E., as it is commonly called, is an educational organization along cooperative lines. It was largely responsible for the establishment of the Equity Cooperative Exchange of St. Paul. This is a farmers' cooperative grain commission company that has handled millions of bushels of grain during the last ten years, and has been of untold value to the farmers of the Northwest in their struggle for economic freedom.

Thus the ground was well prepared for the coming of the Non-Partisan League. Active work of organizing the farmers by the League commenced in July, 1916. Much of the state was organized that year but no attempt was made to give support to candidates for public office. Organization was merely being built up for the campaign of 1918. In spite of persecutions during the war, the Non-Partisan League grew in membership and influence and in the 1918 election an unusually fine



showing was made. The League candidate for Governor at the general election received a large vote, outdistancing the democratic nominee for that office by a wide margin.

In 1919, the Working People's Non-Partisan Political League was organized. The workers political organization was formed "to unite members of organized and unorganized labor into a political league." The membership of the W. P. N. P. L. is made up principally of local unions and Brotherhood organizations who pay into the treasury of the League the sum of two cents per member per month. Individuals are also affiliated with the League, either workers or others, "who pay an affiliation fee of \$3.00 per year."

#### Growing!

The growth of the Farmer-Labor strength can be seen by comparing the vote cast for Governor in the 1918, 1920 and 1922 general elections. The vote was as follows:

	Republican	Democrat	Farmer-Labor	Percent of Total
1918	166,515	76,793	111,948	30
1920	415,805	81,293	281,402	36
1922	309,756	79,903	295,479	43

This shows that there has been a steady increase in the Farmer-Labor strength. This can be accounted for in a large measure by the improvement in the political organization of the city workers. The Non-Partisan League's strength in the rural counties also increased during the same period.

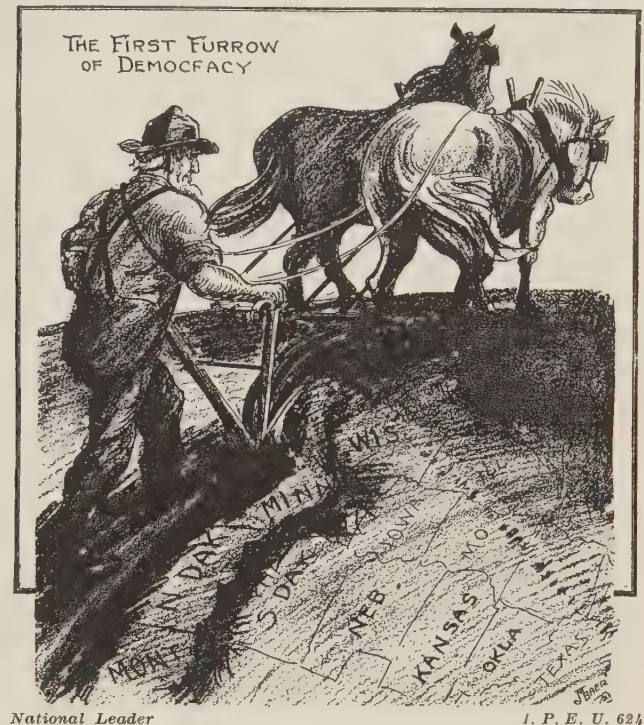
As in 1920, the Non-Partisan League and the Working People's Political League held their 1922 conventions at the same time and in adjacent halls. This enabled their respective committees to confer regarding platform and candidates. A complete ticket was endorsed by both conventions. Moreover, it was decided to nominate all candidates on the Farmer-Labor ticket, and thus make the big fight at the general election instead of contesting nominations in an old-party primary, as had been done twice before. Dr. Henrik Shipstead, the Non-Partisan League-Labor candidate for governor in 1920, was named for the office of United States Senator and Magnus Johnson, of Kimball, a farmer and member of the state senate, was endorsed for governor.

The two leagues waged active campaigns in their own fields. The Farmer-Labor party state committee established headquarters at St. Paul and took general charge of routing speakers and issuing literature. Under the state law the committee is made up of members appointed by the

party's nominees for state and congressional offices. It will be seen that the committee was therefore pretty much the same as the joint committee of the two leagues that originally drafted the candidates.

#### The Brotherhoods

But there were organizations other than the Non-Partisan League and the Working Peoples'



National Leader

I. P. E. U. 624

#### THE FARMER'S REVOLT IN THE NORTHWEST

As seen by the chief organ of the militant farmers.

League that helped swell the Farmer-Labor tide. Among these were the Railroad Brotherhoods, the Senatorial Independent Voters' League, a large number of Shipstead-for-Senator Clubs, and Women's Non-Partisan League Clubs.

The Railroad Brotherhoods played no small part in the 1922 campaign. A number of able men were kept in the field for several weeks prior to the election lining up the workers and small town business people. The Brotherhoods also spent considerable money for literature which was used for general distribution in the State. The Senatorial Independent Voters' League of Minneapolis brought into the campaign Senator Robert M. LaFollette for a number of meetings just prior to the election. These meetings were most effective not only in behalf of Dr. Shipstead but for the ticket as a whole. "Fighting Bob" mercilessly exposed the interests back of the old parties — common enemies of farmer and city worker. The Sena-



## LABOR AGE

torial League also financed the insertion of advertisements in more than one-hundred weekly and daily papers of the state asking the voters to "DEFEAT KELLOGG."

Then, there was that splendid Farmer-Labor daily, the **Minnesota Daily Star**. The Star's influence in the campaign was tremendous. It would be impossible to give a just estimate of its true worth to the movement. The more than forty farmer and labor weeklies, too, exerted a powerful influence in behalf of the ticket.

### "Voting It Straight"

One of the interesting things of the election was the consistency of the vote as compared with previous elections. At the elections of 1918 and 1920 there was a marked difference in the vote cast for the head of the ticket and for the other candidates endorsed by the farmers and workers. This difference was not so marked on November 7th last.

In 1920, there was a difference of 56,801 between the vote cast for the Farmer-Labor candidates for Governor and Lieutenant-Governor respectively. In 1922 the difference between the heads of the ticket was reduced to 29,893. That is the difference in the vote for Dr. Henrik Shipstead, candidate for U. S. Senator, and the vote for Magnus Johnson, candidate for Governor.

But while voters are learning more and more to vote the ticket straight, this is much more the case among the organized farmers than among the unorganized groups in the smaller cities and villages. Wherever the Non-Partisan League had organization, a good, consistent vote was cast.

There are the five scattered counties of Pope, Pennington, Kandiyohi, Watonwan, and Wright, for example. These counties are League counties. They show what took place wherever the League idea was strong. In them Shipstead received 10,496 of the farmers' votes and Johnson 10,461—practically neck and neck. But in the small towns in those same counties Johnson only received 4,693 votes to Shipstead's 5,345. That means that Johnson fell from 99.6 per cent of Shipstead's vote in League territory to 87.8 per cent where the League had little influence.

### Organization Talks!

Obviously the thing that talks is organization. What is needed is to secure some sort of organization in the smaller cities and villages. Neither of the leagues has yet solved this problem. They are

working on that problem now, and in all probability some scheme will be completed to take care of the situation before 1924.

The workers of the cities did splendid work in this last fight. Minneapolis—that gave the Farmer-Labor nominee for Governor in 1918, twenty-two per cent of the vote, gave Shipstead more than forty-five per cent in 1922. St. Paul increased its showing from thirty-one per cent in 1918 to forty-eight per cent for Shipstead. Duluth did equally well, and the smaller cities in which the workers possess political organization showed even more remarkable gains.

This is not surprising when it is known that the workers have been active in local politics in many of these cities for a number of years. They have strong representation in the city councils of Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth. They control the city governments of Montevideo, Two Harbors, Brainerd, and Willmar. In Minneapolis, Labor has 12 aldermen out of 28, in St. Paul 2 out of 7 and in Duluth 2 out of 5. They are not so-called "labor" candidates elected on old party tickets; but are direct representatives of Labor. Their influence is much greater than their numerical strength.

### Civic Stench

In Minneapolis the Labor group are able frequently to get two of their fellow Assemblymen to vote with them on issues of big importance to the workers of the city. Through a combination of this sort, Minneapolis employed Dr. Delos F. Wilcox to represent the city in the valuation of the local street railway. Dr. Wilcox uncovered such a civic stench as to make other cities wonder what has been happening to their own officials and leading citizens. He found that the street railway had distributed money to newspapers, leading men of the community and even to a number of men publicly fighting the corporation. And he has not yet been able to look into the special legislative fund of the company which must contain even more interesting secrets! The counsel for the street railway, it may be well to record, is none other than Pierce Butler, newly appointed United States Supreme Court Justice.

The outlook for victory in 1924 in Minnesota is most promising. The only thing that is necessary to make this future sweeping victory certain is for the two groups of producers to hold firm to each other, and to extend their work during the next year and a half. Then, we will hear even more exciting news from the Northwest.

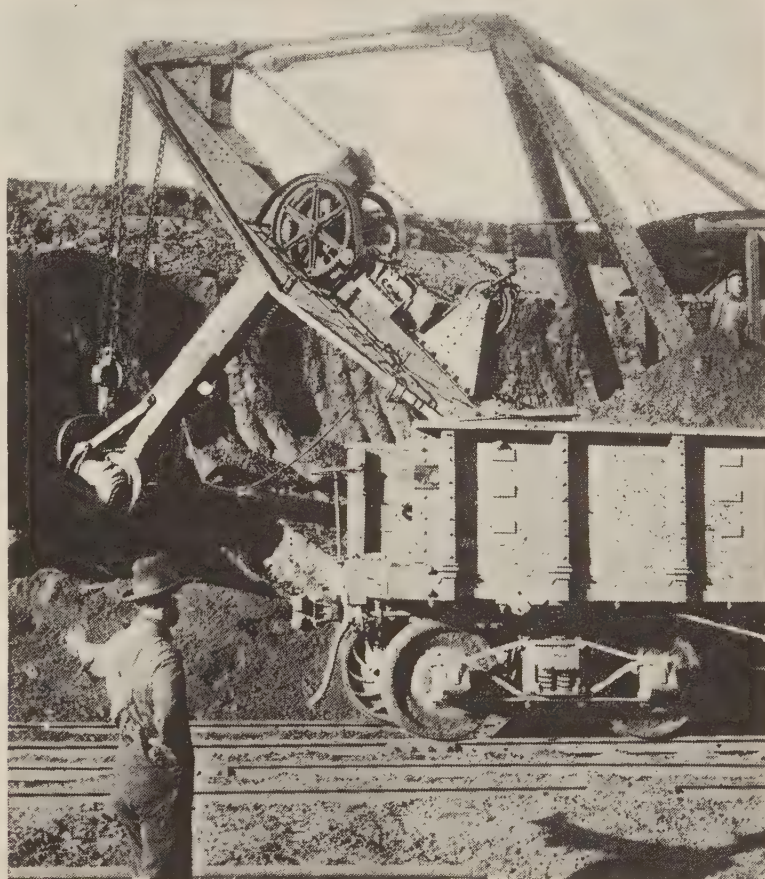


## STEEL! From Minnesota to Pittsburgh

**T**HE one big regret of the Minnesota Labor Movement is the fact that the iron ore strip mines of the North are not organized. U. S. Steel—the ogre of anti-unionism—here as elsewhere—has killed organization. It is in the Mesaba Range that the bitter fight of 1916 was fought. The miners put up a brilliant battle, but the Steel Trust won.

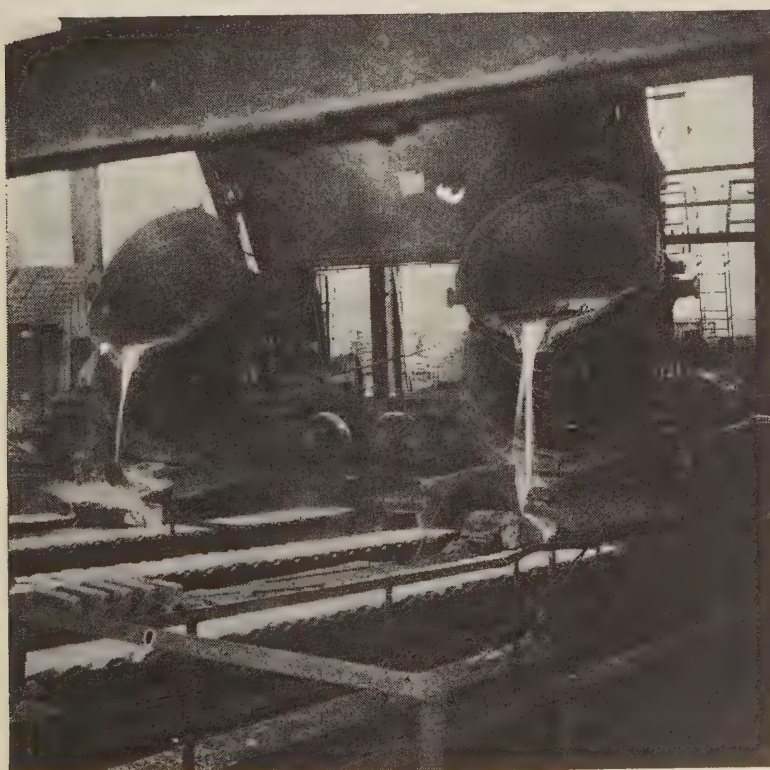
It is from this region that the Steel Kings get their rich ore. It pours through Duluth, to Cleveland—then to Pittsburgh and other steel manufacturing points. It makes Duluth the second biggest port, in point of tonnage, in the world.

The iron ore country is beginning to stir again. Several labor papers have sprung up. Things may happen there soon—to aid in the overthrow of Gary's autocratic rule!



Underwood &amp; Underwood

MINNESOTA



Underwood &amp; Underwood

PITTSBURGH

**M**R. GARY is also due for a tumble from the men who handle the pig iron and molten steel. All the Steel Kings are shouting like stuck pigs about the "labor shortage." U. S. Steel is reported to be operating on 80 per cent capacity. Gary and his comrades want the immigration bars let down, so that immigrant strikebreakers may come in. Was there ever such a time for the steel makers to assert themselves? Was there ever such a time for them to fight for their liberty?





PIERCE BUTLER

"CAN THIS BE SIN ?

x x x x x x x x x

THIS ANSWER OF CARESS TO FOND GARESS

THIS EXQUISITE MATERNAL TENDERNESS ?

HOW COULD SO MUCH OF BEAUTY ENTER IN,

IF THIS BE SIN ? JJ

WARREN GAMALIEL HARDING

Art Young

MINNESOTA GRAIN  
AND STEEL  
INTERESTS

Drawn for LABOR AGE by Art Young

THE YEAR'S PRIZE VALENTINE  
To think, too, that Gamaliel chose This from Minnesota!



# Coal—A Burning Question

*Nationalization Becomes the Big Issue Before the Miners*

**N**ERO fiddled while Rome burned. The coal operators and railroads are fiddling while the consumers do not burn—coal. This is not only the opinion of the labor press. A number of dailies of the business press think likewise. In the cartoons of the latter the householder appears in his usual role of a much abused simpleton.

Substitutes for coal have become exceedingly common this winter. Near large cities the forests have been attacked, to furnish the desperate consumer with heat. In northern New York the freezing citizenry—taking the fuel administration into its own hands—seized carloads of coal en route to Canada.

Such action seems to have been the most effective way to solve the situation in that state and in New England, as shown by testimony presented to the Interstate Commerce Commission. According to the Commission's own investigator, coal shipments through the east were, in many instances from 10 to 40 days in reaching their destinations, although some of the hauls were very short. This, and other evidence given the Commission, bear out the charges of the International Association of Machinists that the railroads are in no fit condition to carry on their business. "We are entering upon the eighth month of the railroad strike, or lockout," the **Machinists Monthly Journal** says, "and while settlements have been made on a great many roads, which has reduced the number of men on the firing line, there are a very large number of railroad systems whose officials have apparently made up their minds to let the roads go to ruin rather than yield a single point. As a matter of fact, the motive power and rolling stock of most of these roads are in a most deplorable condition."

The **Journal** notes with satisfaction that the Commission is about to "investigate" these charges. "If justice is done," it says, "some prominent railroad officials are due to retire from their present scene of activity."

That these roads have not been able to break the spirit of the striking shopmen is confirmed by reports from all over the country. William Hannon, of the executive board of the Machin-

ists, writes thus in the **Journal** about the shopmen at Soldier Summit, Utah:

"When a man sees strikers standing together one hundred per cent, with hunger and want staring them in the face; when you see men and women and little children facing snow-drifts and the biting cold wind, that sweeps across a mountain top eight thousand feet above sea level; when you see those same people living in tents to wake up in the middle of the night to find themselves submerged beneath tons of snow, and forced on a winter's day to seek shelter from the elements, and turn from the useless tent to a dugout or shack—or better still to a trench, you feel they cannot lose."

In the midst of this confusion, President Harding's Coal Commission comes through with its first report—to state that the condition in coal is even more muddled up than was imagined. The soft coal field is not only over-developed, but even at times of the highest demand, the mines as a whole do not work full time. The condition is getting steadily worse. In 1910, the Commission says, the average soft coal mine was operating 217 days in the year as against 149 days in 1921. Although the efficiency of the average miner had increased in that time, he is being penalized for this increase by being allowed fewer working days. The Commission states that it will canvas all the solutions offered for this bad situation, including government ownership.

The **United Mine Workers Journal**, organ of the Miners, finds it "gratifying" that the Commission "is awake to the real trouble and is bending its energies in employing its efforts to find a way out of the maze"—the lack of steady employment. The **Journal** continues:

"There is just one way by which this fundamental disease of unsteady employment and operation can be disposed of and that is through a reduction of the number of mines and the number of miners employed. As long as there are too many mines and too many miners there will be intermittent employment and operation, all of which adds to the cost of coal which the public must buy and low earnings for the miners."

The **Journal** hints pretty strongly that the national administration of the miners is opposed to government control or regulation. It does not know "of any one in the coal business, from miner to retail dealer, who wishes" such control. On nationalization it is conspicuously silent—considering the fact that a Nationalization Research Committee had been at work on that



## LABOR AGE

problem for almost a year, under instructions of the last Convention. This silence was partially explained when Ellis Searles, editor of the **United Mine Workers Journal** (and spokesman for President Lewis) attacked the members of the Committee for having made the tentative plan for nationalization public, and charging that the work on the Commission's reports had been done by "Greenwich Village Reds."

This attack followed immediately upon the heels of the announcement of a new agreement

a quick rejoinder from C. J. Golden, President of District No. 9 and member of the Committee. Mr. Golden resigned from the Committee because "it is impossible and undesirable to go on under these hamstrung and censored conditions." He adds that,

"Mr. Searles does not remember that four years ago by unanimous vote in the mine workers' convention the officers of the mine workers were instructed to draft a bill and present it to the United States congress, demanding public ownership of the mines."

Mr. Searles took particular exception to the



N. Y. World



N. Y. Times.

### CHAOS IN COAL

Death from "mine disasters" often walks through the coal fields—due frequently to bad management. That is shown in the one picture. In the other Howard Mingos depicts the "coal strike of 1922"—the barbed wire enclosures making the idle collieries look like war trenches.

in the soft coal field. This agreement, the **United Mine Workers Journal** hails as "peace in the soft coal fields for another year." It thinks that,

"Members of the United Mine Workers' of America may well be proud of their record of the past twelve months. It is a notable accomplishment when the union can put a definite stop to the campaign for wage reductions and then secure a continuation of their present wages and working conditions unaltered and unchanged."

It prophesies that the hard coal field will follow suit.

Mr. Searles' statement on the Research Committee did not appear in the **Journal** but was released to the New York papers. It brought forth

fact that Mr. Golden, as secretary of the Commission, had read a tentative plan for nationalization at the recent annual dinner of the **League for Industrial Democracy**. This was an extended explanation of the plan outlined by John Brophy in the November **LABOR AGE**. Norman Thomas, director of the League, challenged President Lewis to make known his views on nationalization. "To favor nationalization," he wrote, "but to forbid public discussion of concrete plans reminds me of the old nursery rhyme which begins: 'Mother, may I go out to swim?'" The public has a right to ask you to clarify your position. The League would be honored to offer



you the platform it offered Mr. Golden that you may set the public right in an issue which cannot wait for discussion until the miners' convention in 1924."

The **Illinois Miner**, organ of Frank Farrington's District No. 12 of the Miners, took up the cudgels for nationalization and the Research Committee. It not only published the Committee's report in full but declared that "John L. Lewis must state his position in regard to the nationalization of the coal mines of the country." It says that President Lewis has "preserved a notable silence" on this subject, "ever since the last mine workers' convention unanimously voted in favor of public ownership." It further adds that Mr. Searles is not a member of the United Mine Workers, "and sees a practical coal miner about as often as he sees a rhinoceros. The people of whom he speaks as Greenwich Villagers are the same who are doing, and have done, so much for the striking miners throughout our jurisdiction and are the most progressive friends the miners have."

John Brophy, of District No. 2, Chairman of the Committee, also sent in his resignation to President Lewis shortly after Golden had taken such action. In the **Penn Central News** he charges that "Mr. Searles cannot shoot holes in the American Plan, so he says we got it from some New York radicals." Brophy calls attention to the fact that "the **Mine Workers Journal** won't publish the Miners' Plan," and asks that the miners "see to it that every free labor paper in the country carries the plan and discusses it." He also asks that the plan be talked over in the locals and with other workers and that

the Districts be encouraged to distribute leaflets on the plan; also that a rank and file nationalization committee be appointed and that every local send in a resolution to the next International convention, demanding a bill based on the plan.

These suggestions seem to indicate that nationalization will be the big issue before the miners during the next eleven months. They are in line with the statement of Golden that in his opinion "by the next convention the United Mine Workers will have smoked out all the weaklings who have been voting year after year for the idea of nationalization and have no intention of carrying it out to its logical conclusion."

In his letter of resignation, Mr. Brophy challenges President Lewis to "mail copies of the American Plan to the 600,000 union miners" and "if the Plan does not embody their aspirations in concrete form this test will kill it." He adds that "replies we have received from miners in every coal district of the United States show that the Plan is the answer to their unrest and the rallying point for the larger policy of the union." He also demands that Lewis "urge upon the officials of the 26 districts of the United Mine Workers' of America a powerful intensive campaign of education, district by district, in support of nationalization."

Summing up the situation as he sees it, he says:

"The public is disgusted by the over development, mismanagement and waste of the coal industry, and is ready for a large-scale solution.

"The miners are determined.

"The movement waits on you. But it will not wait long for any leader. It will create its own leaders."

#### ALSO ABOUT MINNESOTA

**H**AVE you heard about the "Minnesota Plan" of amalgamating the railroad unions? Do you know that the Minnesota Federation of Labor was the first federation to declare in favor of industrial unionism this last year? These questions remind us that Minnesota leads not only in cooperation and in independent political activity.

The **Minnesota Union Advocate**, referring to this movement says: "At the Crookston convention of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor on July 18, 1922, a resolution endorsing the principle of industrial unionism was unanimously passed. Since that date nearly every state convention gathering has passed a like resolution. The national conventions of the railway clerks, of the maintenance of way men, and of the machinists, have adopted amalgamation resolutions.

"Numerous central bodies and unions have gone on record for closer affiliation or amalgamation of crafts in each industry. The movement is spreading like wild-fire, not so much in response to any strong propaganda which is decoying the workers, but rather in compliance with the irresistible forces of industrial development."

In workers education the Gopher state is one of the leaders—with educational institutions in Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth. In fuller statements on industrial unionism and workers education, in future issues, these Minnesota stories will be included.

The cover page pictures a scene frequent in Minnesota—a log jam on a northern river. The lumber industry is one of Minnesota's largest—though not employing a great number of workers and not thoroughly organized.



# Guilds of Modern Florence

## *Italian Workers Do Big Jobs—For Themselves*

By ODon POR

**T**HIS is a tale of Florence the Beautiful. Not the city of Dante the poet and Lorenzo the Magnificent; but 20th century Florence, with Socialism, Communism and Fascism in the air. I am also to tell you about guilds—reminding us of the Middle Ages, when this city was world-famous and the workers owned their own tools. But the guilds of which I write are of today, and through them the workers are trying to regain possession of their industries.

It was in 1915, just as Italy went into the World War. Four cooperative societies—which had carried on their work in Florence for a decade or two—decided to form a Federation of Productive Guilds. These societies had done fine work all through their existence—training laborers for collective work and preparing them for larger ventures. The new Federation (or the F. G. F., as I shall call it) would allow the workers to do bigger and more effective things it was thought. It would also enable them to cut costs.

### **From Foundation to Door Keys!**

That thought has been justified by what has resulted. Today there are 74 guilds in the F. G. F. These employ 15,000 workmen—all of whom are guildsmen, members of one or the other guild. They cover all sorts of trades, from sculptors, engineers and forest workers to building laborers and road construction workers. Through their joint cooperation, F. G. F. is able to contract for the most difficult and complex work. For instance, it can take over the construction of big buildings and put through the job directly and entirely—from the foundation to the door keys, including the furniture, electric installations, plumbing, decorating, and anything else necessary to make a house perfect. As you would say in America, that is “going some.” That also means, of course, that F. G. F. must have all the most modern machinery to carry on its big enterprises. It owns great timber and construction material yards, miles upon miles of small gauged rail lines, mechanical elevators and mixers—in short, everything to do a good and rapid job. All this is the collective property of the guilds, managed by the F. G. F. and distributed to each guild according to need.

Can you be surprised, then, to learn that this strong group goes out into the open market for

large-scale work of almost any sort, and outbids and outdoes the private contractors? The Province of Florence has, time after time, given to it the most important public works, at public bid-dings in competition with private contractors. The public officers know that the F. G. F. can not only do the work cheaper but can give guarantees of good work under just working conditions that the private employers cannot give.

Anyone visiting Italy today should see the beautiful new National Library in Florence. It is a Monument to Art. The work of the marble-workers, stone-masons and sculptors is particularly fine. In every line and curve there is a touch of that power which has given Italy fame as the home of painters and sculptors. From top to bottom it is the work of the F. G. F. It is the same with the new Florentine Post Office, equally attractive and artistic in its building decorations. The guildsmen have put all their creative selves into these jobs, because these are their own jobs, under their own joint control. It looks as though true Beauty in Work can only be secured when group action of this sort blooms in a big way again.

### **Houses for the Workers**

The F. G. F. is about to finish a most important social undertaking: the construction of a large block of houses for the Institute of Popular Houses. This block will contain 630 rooms, numerous halls, a school and a cooperative store. So efficient and rapid was the work on these houses, that the Institute gave the F. G. F. another group with 800 rooms, and the Railway Workers' Housing Cooperative Society awarded it the contract for 53 individual cottages. These operations require about 1,000 workmen of the building trades.

That is but part of the F. G. F.'s big contracts. It is doing a great deal of road and bridge construction for the Province of Florence and for various cities. It has obtained, by bid, the permanent job of keeping all the roads of the Province in repair—which means the employment of hundreds of road laborers all through the year. Important hydraulic engineering, reclamation of swamp land and river regulation is also in its hands, occupying great numbers of guildsmen.



It would be really tiring to tell all that is being done. The Carpenters and Cabinet Makers' Guild is making artistic modern furniture, imitations of antique furniture, common furniture and doing industrial carpentry. Their shops are furnished with all the best apparatus for wood seasoning and carving. Hardware and electricians' guilds are flooded with orders. Many of the guilds are filling orders from abroad as well as for Italian customers outside the Province.

#### Fighting Banking and Material "Trusts"

To finance this intense activity, the guilds have lately founded a Regional Cooperative Bank. The capital for the bank is being subscribed by individual workmen and by their guilds and other labor bodies. This bank will help to break the "money trust" of the private banks, and will strengthen the National Credit Institution for Cooperation—which is a cooperative bank, partly under state control. Thus will the guilds reward the National Credit Institution for the aid it gave them in the days of their infancy.

Before the F. G. F. can extend its activities fully, it must break the hold of another bad monopoly or "trust"—that of the building material producers. This trust earns a net profit of from 30 to 40 per cent, and at the same time limits the amount of building work which a state or local government can do. It compels them to limit themselves to only a certain fixed amount on construction each year.

To overcome this obstacle, the F. G. F. is studying how it can extend guild management and ownership to brick and cement works, thus cutting the price of building materials and stimulating private and public building. The Stone-masons' Cooperative Society—which owns rich quarries and is successfully keeping pace with the private companies—is an example which has encouraged the F. G. F. to go further along this road of self-sufficiency. **The so-called public good and the guild efforts here go hand in hand, as they have in all other developments.** And it must be remembered that this could not help being so, for in addition to being a part of the General Confederation of Labor and the National Federation of Productive and Labor Guilds, the F. G. F. is also a member of the National League of Cooperative Societies and the Tuscan Federation of Consumers' Cooperative Societies. It cannot help but think in terms of consumers as well as of producers. For, in its eyes the consumers and producers are the very same persons.

#### How It Is Run

How is this F. G. F. run? Very simply, indeed. Each of its guilds maintain their own legal, administrative and technical independence. The F. G. F. goes after the contracts, public and private, of a large-scale character. The guilds are free to accept small orders, and carry them out independently of the F. G. F. In such cases the F. G. F. is only concerned that no competition or conflict should arise between the various guilds.

The F. G. F. buys all the necessary materials, machines, etc. and provides the working capital. Its own capital is subscribed by the affiliated guilds, which pay into its funds 35 lire for each member and five per cent from their own capital. The board of each guild sends delegates to the Assembly of the F. G. F., which elects the Board of Directors of the Federation.

From the earnings of the F. G. F., twenty per cent goes to the reserve fund; five per cent of the remaining profits goes to the affiliated guilds (and not more) in proportion to the shares paid up by them; fifteen per cent goes to a "mutual aid" fund; five per cent to the Education and Propaganda Fund. The remaining profits go to the single guilds in proportion to the wages paid to their members for work executed for the F. G. F.

While the single guilds are self-governed and directly responsible for the work entrusted to them by the F. G. F., therefore, the latter aids them at every step. It sees that their work is done efficiently; it audits their business books, keeps their correspondence, disciplines and inspires their work. In short, it makes them into a strong, united body. It links them up with all the other vital labor organizations, and thus is able to bring pressure to bear on public opinion and the public authorities.

It provides all the advantages of great scale capitalist industry—united management, saving of raw materials, saving of overhead expenses, efficient use of plants, etc.—without its disadvantages—autocracy, bossing, and private profits. It functions as a public service, for it provides work where eventually no work would be done. It educates and trains the workers and gives them a new position as free producers. It provides better and cheaper work for the community.

It is one of several beginnings in Italy of a new method of doing things; a new guild system, under control of the workers, gradually taking the place of the present private-profit making machinery.



# Running Away From Life

## *The Way That Men Evade the Real Things*

By PRINCE HOPKINS

THE chief difference between the psychology of even twenty years ago and that of today is that the former looked on man as "the rational animal" whereas today we should rather call him "the rationalizing animal." It used to be thought that reason was a "faculty" set above desire for the latter's control. It's now held that a desire can be controlled only by a stronger desire or by a group of desires. Reason is a sort of lawyer retained by the desires to show them how they may get what they want, or to apologize for their acts, afterward, to conscience.

Conscience is a little parrot who keeps repeating phrases that it overhears from others. "Now you must be industrious" or, "you must not muss up your new suit," it says to a little boy when he wants to sprawl on the green grass. So the lawyer, Reason, "gets busy," to explain that the boy's real ground for wanting to sprawl on the grass is, so he may be in condition to work all the harder next day, and earn a bran new suit. This is what the psychologist calls "rationalizing." It's a method of putting that parrot, conscience, to sleep.

But even this "rationalizing" is a more strenuous activity than our brain likes to follow, once we are sprawled full length in the sun. Our mind then goes into what is called reverie, which is simply the painting of pleasing pictures in the clouds. The harder time we have, meeting the reality of life, the more we like in imagination to get away from it altogether, through the medium of day-dreams. In his dreams the vagrant tramp imagines he is a king or a millionaire, until something brings him, with a sickening feeling, back to reality.

### **Away From Harsh Facts!**

Behind both "rationalizing" and "dreaming" of this kind is a common mechanism, the "pleasure principle." This has for its object, to shield us a little while from painful truth. The more pleasure-loving we are, the more we thus flee from the harsh facts of life. But unfortunately, like the opium-pill, it ends with reality crashing in on us with a greater thud than ever.

Not only individuals have their rationalizations and dreams; peoples and races have them too. The race which wishes to steal another

race's land, or which finds its war-profiteering interfered with, calls itself Yaveh's chosen folk, or rants about "making the world safe for" something it doesn't practice at home. Every people creates or adopts a series of dreams also about the universe, through which it appears that to meet life as it is, and better conditions in this world for the masses, is unnecessary, because, after living here only a little while, good dreamers will be graduated into another existence where all will be blissful.

The earliest and crudest form of such belief is evolved from animism. Childlike men tended to vent their feelings without restraint; if they were angry, then to kick something; if thinking of a beloved one who had died, to call his name and address words to him; if pleased at something, to give thanks.

Next they began to "rationalize." For example a child might ask "Dad, why did you kick the stone hatchet when it hit your finger? Why do you talk to grandpop, when he has been dead a month? Whom are you thanking because you speared so many salmon?" Then up spoke "Reason" in the father: "Because the hatchet meanly wanted to hurt me, and can feel my kick" or "because Grandpop's double or breath (spirit) or shadow (shade) still exists, and appears to me in my dreams." Or, "because there is a salmon Totem, which brought all these fish to my spear."

### **Spirits Who Smoke**

At the present time, as the result of a great war which created in millions of hearts the desire for converse with sons, brothers and lovers killed in that war, we have a return of belief in spirits. Even when this superstition was at its post-war height, however, it had fewer adherents than it had at the crest of its wave in the last century. It illustrated, however, the power of strong desire to revive even among a few men of scientific achievement, most primitive kinds of belief in absurdly material "spirits" that lived in a heaven where they smoked cigars and drank whiskey.

Another lesson which spiritism teaches, is that so soon as the public evinces a willingness to pay for proofs of the most absurd "phenomena," there will be charlatans ready to supply it. Men



like Joseph Rinn in New York have a standard offer of a check in four figures for any "phenomena" they can't duplicate by simple trickery. The "Scientific American" now offers a like prize. Others, like Clyde Maskelyne in London, give never-ending expositions of the complete repertory of spiritist tricks. One medium after another is exposed. The criminal records are full of accounts of how "reputable mediums" who "give only private sittings" and "never accept pay for them" are connected with bucket-shops and fraudulent stock companies in which they induce their dupes to invest, employ private detectives and have central lists of indexed names, from which they get information by telegram, and pay commission to persons who circulate in "good society" to convince intended victims with tales of their "marvelous" doings.

Although new inventions like "ectoplasm" and faked photographs of "ghosts" and "fairies" are continually being added, most of the modern medium's tricks are used by savage voodoo doctors and shamans. The line of development, therefore, has been away from spiritism through polytheism, monotheism, and now to some mystic entity or non-entity such as the "elan vital" of Prof. Bergson, or the "collective unconscious" of the C. J. Jung school of psychoanalysts, or the "adepts" who inspire the leaders of theosophy, or the beings who, according to a school led by Gurdieff (whose apparently very able system of psychological development I am, at this writing, in France to investigate at their institute near Fontainebleau) live in worlds of 4, 5, 6, or 7 dimensions.

#### Evading Reality

In all these religions the basis of belief may be said to be a desire to evade the duty of practical homely aid in making this present world a better place to live in. We have no reason to believe that if we have souls at all, they go away from this planet after death, and aren't simply reborn here. Really no proof of a soul has ever been evinced. On the contrary, physiology, psychology, and medicine combine to prove that we have no power whatever of remembering or thinking or feeling at all unless the appropriate nervous mechanism is present. What should a soul be that remembered nothing, thought nothing, and felt nothing? All that we are is of this earth; and if it is to live again, it lives here, and must face the duty of making here a place fit to be its home.

Neither can we depend on beings superior to humanity to do our work for us. There are plenty of tests for a superior being. If He is all-wise and all good and all powerful, He will not permit catastrophes like the great war, which bring untold misery and destroy the strength and characters of millions who trust in Him. He might also be expected to preserve His churches erected in His honor, from destruction by lightning. Or by a single act of His will, instead of the clumsy and unsuccessful devices hitherto used, to convince all men of his existence.

A similar argument will be found to apply to each of the other metaphysical hypotheses above mentioned. But the majority of men will refuse to apply the same tests to religious hypotheses that they do to science or business, so long as they are seeking to evade reality.

Another mental factor in religion, is sex. The very language of religion is full of words which show how closely it's linked up with this, in the human mind. Thus Jesus is the Heavenly Bridegroom, whom we are to Love. The church is his Spouse. The marriage ceremony is said to "symbolize the holy union of Christ with his church." Nuns are regarded, and regard themselves as "wedded to Christ." The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is called Holy Communion.

Similarly, the cross, baptism, and nearly all of the trappings and ceremonies of the church—and these, by the way, are mostly thousands of years older than Christianity itself, and were formerly pagan customs—are easily shown to have a sexual significance. But the reader who has no time to undertake scholarly researches in that line, will find proof for his eyes if he will attend, as a critical observer, the next revivalist meeting in his town. He will see antics and facial expressions unmistakably sexual. And more "dignified" religion has merely evolved from this type.

The primal thing, then, which makes men continue irrational, is their persistent immaturity, their panic stricken retreat into fantasy and myth-making when confronted with reality. And reality is like a giant which grows bigger every time we flee from him. If we don't face him at the start, he eats us up in the end.

In sum, our evasiveness gives us gods and metaphysical fantasies. In return, god-belief and metaphysical fantasy keep us from facing reality.



*A Play Worth While*

"R. U. R."  
The Revolt of the Robots

**T**IME: *The Future.* Place: *An island, where robots are being manufactured.*

These robots are machine-men. (So the story runs.) They were originally invented in crude form by an old scientist, Rossum by name. His son, an engineer, saw their business value, and perfected them—making them an "improvement" on men workers. They could not feel, for example. They could not revolt. After a working lifetime of some twenty years, they were sent to the scrap heap, as any machine.

Big Business saw their value. Orders for them poured in. They supplanted workingmen everywhere. Nations made use of them for their armies. The robot armies slew not only each other, but the humans as well. Also, because there was no more use for human labor, the race ceased to have children.

The daughter of the president of the company making the robots sympathized with them and wanted to make them more human. She persuaded one of the scientists of the company to experiment with them—give them a higher nervous system. The robots began to feel pain. They finally revolted against mankind.

Over civilization the robot wave spread. The robot armies swept all before them. They wiped out the human race, swarming at last to the island of their manufacture. There they destroyed the last remaining man, save one, whom they spared because he worked with his hands.

"Robots throughout the World!" ran their triumphant cry. "Mankind is destroyed. The dawn is here."

But the dawn was not yet. For they could not reproduce themselves. They tried to persuade the one remaining man to experiment with them, so that they could manufacture themselves. But he was no scientist. In the last act—when all seemed lost—two of the robots, made of a higher order than the rest—learn the meaning of human love. Through their mating the robot race is saved.

As a warning to Capitalism and a symbol of the Russian Revolution, the play is effective. The answer to the question: "How can the workers rule when they win their freedom?" is weakly answered. It is, of course, the most difficult question of all. But for anyone interested in the questions of the present day, the play is thoroughly worth while.





# Labor History in the Making

*In the U. S. A.*

(By the Manager, in Cooperation with the Board of Editors.)

## NEW YORK TAKES NOTICE

Well, well! "Little ole New York" was given a thrill this last month. The labor banking idea came to town, when the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers purchased part ownership in the Empire Trust Company and announced the establishment of a New York bank in the near future. The newspapers went agog over it. The "World" sent its staff correspondent, Martin Green, to Cleveland to find out what had been happening out there. The "Herald" had its special writer, W. H. Crawford, explain what labor banking meant—drawing liberally from past issues of LABOR AGE in doing so. The "Times" drafted Evans Clark, executive director of the Labor Bureau, to do the job for them.

By the establishment of the new bank Grand Chief Stone has fulfilled his promise "to go down in among the powers that be" and "play the game with them." Just what was the purpose in the part purchase of the Empire Trust Company is not yet clear. But the announced motive of Stone in having the Brotherhoods take up the banking business, as revealed in his speech at the Houston Convention, is for Labor "to control the financial policy of the United States." As Evans Clark puts it, "Labor is now definitely reaching for financial power through the control of credit. Labor has not reached very far as yet. Ten banks in a country with many thousands of banks is not much; but it is a beginning, and the reach is not yet three years long."

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers operates the largest and most successful of these banks—its Cleveland Co-operative Bank. This bank now reports assets of no less than \$15,547,000. It will soon be housed in a new 22-story building. Its branch bank—only a few squares away—occupies a 17-story building. The Engineers also own the Nottingham Trust Company in the suburbs of Cleveland. The International Association of Machinists are also carrying on successful banking ventures in Washington. The Philadelphia bank—controlled by the Central Labor Union—is making headway. The Amalgamated Bank in Chicago—owned and controlled by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers—announces deposits of \$1,250,000 after six months of operation. The bank has been so successful that the Executive Board of the Clothing Workers has decided to establish branch banks in other cities.

But the ten banks in operation are only part of the story. The Transportation Brotherhoods have just opened their new bank in Minneapolis, as reported in this issue. The International Union of Bricklayers is considering the establishment of a bank in the other Twin City, St. Paul. The Brotherhood of Railroad Clerks and the Order of Railway Telegraphers at their last conventions also decided to take up this business—the one in Cincinnati and the other in St. Louis. Railroad workers in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and Spokane, Washington have voted for such banks. In Port Huron, Michigan; Buffalo, New York and Los Angeles, California, labor banks are also soon to be established. The New York State Federation of Labor and the New York City Central Labor Council have just launched the million-dollar Federation Trust and Savings Bank.

The growth of labor banking in the last three years is only a beginning. As Organized Labor sees the possibilities of this new weapon, it will use it more and more. Under wise generalship, it can thus push the Profit Maker more and more against the wall. Dr. Howe puts it well in the June LABOR AGE: "If labor controlled its own credit resources today it would profoundly influence all forms of industry and profoundly check the aggressions of the capitalistic system. Ultimately, it may change our whole industrial system."

## MAKING BIG ONES INTO BIGGER ONES

STEEL is merging again. This time it is the so-called independent companies who are getting together. Bethlehem is taking over Midvale and Lackawanna. Forty-two companies in all, under the control of these three holding companies, are involved in the deal. It all began several months ago. At that time, Henry Daugherty—that Watchdog for the Public—put his O. K. on the combination. But now the Federal Trade Commission says it is all wrong—that the deal violates the Clayton Anti-Trust Act and should be stopped. Bethlehem, however, thumbs its nose at the Commission, saying that it has faith in the Supreme Court. Such faith is justified!

Copper has followed suit. The Anaconda Copper Company—the largest copper producer in the world—has taken over the Chile Copper Company—first among the world's copper mines in the matter of ore reserves. The theatrical business has done likewise—the two big interests, Erlanger and the Shuberts, joining hands. The Actors Equity Association—which has been as much concerned with raising the standards of the stage as with economic conditions—declares this merger a step backward. Will the new Stage Kings—grown cocky as the result of monopoly—use this power against the theatrical unions? It would be no surprise! But in these unions they are sure to meet their match, as they have in the past.





N. Y. World

"IN BUSINESS"

"ME, TOO!"

SOME sections of Labor, also, are thinking about amalgamation. The proposed merger of the Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers is now being worked out by committees from the two unions. A better working spirit between the rail organizations will also probably result from the act of W. G. Lee, President of the Railway Trainmen, in removing himself from the ranks of labor leaders. He becomes the President of a \$10,000,000 safety device corporation. No doubt he has been thinking along corporation lines for some time. He has been considered a reactionary by his fellow labor leaders. All during the Shopmen's strike, he played a part hostile to the strikers. Recently, he had the brass to condemn the men who had "abandoned" a train at Needles, Arizona, because of its defective equipment. The breach between Warren S. Stone and himself had become so great of late that Stone had called upon the trainmen to desert Lee and join the Switchmen's Union.

In Chicago early in December there was held the first National Railroad Amalgamation Conference. According to the *Labor Herald*, organ of W. Z. Foster's Trade Union Educational League, "it was a tremendous success." Some 400 delegates endorsed amalgamation, "declaring whole-heartedly for one union for the entire railroad industry." "Craftism" and "dualism" were both condemned. President W. H. Johnston of the Machinists—who has been an advocate of amalgamation for a number of years—issued a statement against this conference, condemning it as another dual organization in the making. This was also the view of Grand Chief Stone of the Locomotive Engineers, who fears that it will tear the movement to pieces over such questions as the Red Trade Union International. On the other hand, the *Railroad Worker*, organ of the American Federation of Railroad Workers—the independent industrial union—thinks that the conference is doomed to failure because of its

decision to work within the A. F. of L. and the Brotherhoods. The "amalgamation" to which it looks forward with hope is that between the Federation of Railroad Workers and the newly arisen United Association of Railway Employees. This means, it thinks, the establishment of "a large, powerful and efficient industrial railroad organization, that will reach from coast to coast and border to border."

In spite of these differences, all champions of industrial unionism agree that some effective means should be found to oppose a solid front to the railway interests, rather than the 16 different organizations facing the railroads at the present time.

#### EMERY AND IVORY

TWO "Emerys" figure prominently in current news. One of them is that old tried and true Enemy of Labor, James A. Emery, counsel for the National Association of Manufacturers. The scales have fallen from James' eyes. He now sees that our immigration policy is all wrong. The wicked "Bolsheviks" and "scum of Europe," have become our blood brothers and should be allowed to flow in freely. James wishes them to cut American Labor's wages still further.

The other Emery is Emery Dust. A bad actor apparently! For, the manager of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railway solemnly swears that Emery Dust was the cause of locomotive engines being put out of business at the rate of 26 per day during the height of the shopmen's strike. "Sabotage!" cried this manager—Bardo by name—before the committee of the Connecticut legislature which is looking into the bad condition of the New Haven. Then he trotted out his charge that the shopmen mixed emery dust with oil to injure the locomotives.

Sad, if true! But is it not rather to be expected that the trouble arose from lack of skilled mechanics? Nary a word on that from Mr. Bardo. The New Haven will be remembered as a model for all privately owned railroads—its history being full of graft (under the wing of the sainted Morgan himself), inefficiency and general stupidity. True to form, it is continuing this tradition—in fighting the shopmen "to the last ditch." The Labor Bureau showed that, as a result, the condition of locomotives on the New Haven up to December 15th grew worse by 3.1 per cent. On 10 big roads that settled with the shopmen, in contrast, the locomotive condition improved 7.8 per cent.

The trouble with the New Haven (as with the Pennsylvania and a number of other roads) is not emery but ivory—solid ivory—in the heads of its officials.

To think, too, that these old boys get such modest salaries for their crude work! The Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce has just revealed the salaries of railroad presidents. Take as exhibit "A," L. F. Loree, President of the D. L. & W. and the champion labor hater of the world. He receives the mere pittance of \$72,500 per year from two roads, in addition to his director's fees in 32 other roads. Since private operation again went into effect, Mr. Loree has raised his salary \$5,000 in one case and \$12,500 in another. As Basil Manly writes in *LaFollette's Monthly*, "No wonder Mr. Loree is one of the principal advocates of private operation of railroads!" But then, Mr. Loree is even over-shadowed by his colleague, Julius Kruttschmidt of the Southern Pacific. That gentleman gets the starvation wage of \$100,000 a year.



Railroad presidents and chairmen of boards rival Jack Dempsey in getting big swag for short time work.

### AMALGAMATION OR ALLIANCE?

**T**HAT is the question put up to the Needle Trades by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. The executive board of that body, in accepting the invitation of the United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers for a conference leading to an alliance, have declared that they prefer "amalgamation" to federation. This is in conformity with the statement of their last convention in favor of "complete consolidation of all unions in the needle trades with one General Executive Board, one treasury, and with separate departments for the branches of the industry in which separate unions now function."

The International Ladies' Garment Workers' and the International Fur Workers' Unions have also accepted the invitation of the Cap Makers. The Journeymen Tailors

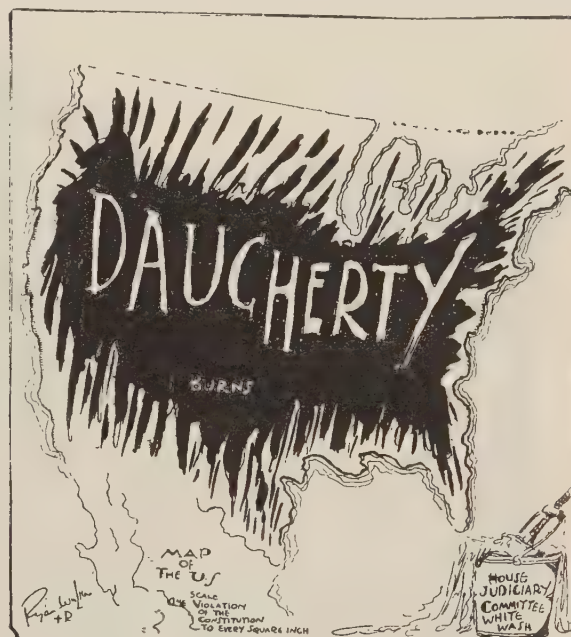
### AGAIN: PIECE WORK VS. WEEK WORK

**T**HE Ladies' Garment Workers have not stated their position in advance, largely because of the big strike of the dress and waist makers. The issue in this strike is Piece Work vs. Week Work. The Manufacturers Association wishes to impose the former on the workers. Their solid front—25,000 going out at once and staying out—assures a week-work victory. The Wholesale Dress Association, in fact, seeing the way things were going, has signed an agreement of its own with the union—only to accept from the manufacturers union-made products. This wholesale association is the body of the chief distributing jobbers in this trade. It is largely from them, as *Justice* points out, that the manufacturers and contractors obtain their orders.

At the same time that this strike is on, the children dress makers are also out. This is an organization



Milwaukee Leader



N. Y. Call

### "PASSING" EVENTS

Callaghan of the Milwaukee Leader thinks that the above situation—Farmer-Labor in the old parties—will not last long. While Ryan of the New York Call demands that not a whitewash, but a thorough cleansing be applied to Daughertyism.

have not answered, but it is very likely that they, too, will join.

On the question of "Alliance or Amalgamation," the *Headgear Worker*, organ of the Cap Makers, says:

On careful consideration one must come to the conclusion that all too much stress is laid on the supposed alternative of "Alliance or Amalgamation," as if the really great problem of centralization and decentralization could possibly be solved in this simple manner.

The fact is, whether you will call the coming coalition of the needle trades unions "Alliance" or Amalgamation, you will still face exactly the same problem, with regard to the proper distribution of functions and authority as between the component parts and the entire coalition. So far there was not a single suggestion that the memberships of all the present international unions of the needle trades be simply merged into one melting pot.

When the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union adopted at its last convention a resolution in favor of an Alliance it had primarily in view the urgent necessity for all the needle trades workers to undertake a joint organization drive, which could be accomplished only by the permanent and organized cooperation of all the organizations of the needle trades' workers. But to undertake such joint organization work the Alliance will no doubt need a common Executive, no matter what name you call it, a common treasury, and a sufficient measure of cohesion and authority, without which no body can ever do any effective work or accomplish any great task.

strike, to force complete unionization of all workers in the industry. The employers have plainly been astonished at the vigor of the strike—which points to a workers' victory.

Through the resignation of President Benjamin Schlesinger, the garment workers have had to make a change in chiefs. The reason given by Schlesinger for his action, and repeated by *Justice*, is his continued ill health. It will be recalled that he threatened to resign at the last convention for that reason and because of the "obstructionist" tactics, as he termed them, of the left wing in the union. The special convention in Baltimore elected Morris Sigman, a hard-fighting trade unionist, as president, without opposition. Though Sigman represents the dominant group in the union, he is known to be looked upon with favor by other sections.



### STEEL WANTS UNION ORGANIZERS

From the Financial Section of the New York Times, Jan. 29th:

*"The chief limiting factor in steel mill operations is the supply of labor. This has increased somewhat since last October, but not as much as would be expected from the curtailment in outdoor work."*

From the Financial Section of the New York Journal, Feb. 2d:

*"Men are scarce . . . The United States Steel Corporation, according to reports from the Pittsburgh district, is running 85 per cent of capacity, and the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, its largest competitor, about 80 per cent. During the final quarter of 1922, the leader of the industry cooperated about 80 per cent."*

*"Mr. Gary remarked that the various subsidiaries of the Steel Corporation were still handicapped by a shortage of labor which he attributed mainly to the present selective immigration law."*

**What steel seems to want is a few union organizers to relieve the labor shortage! Perhaps their presence in the mills or thereabouts—followed by a walkout and decent working hours—would solve Mr. Gary's labor problems.**

### In Other Lands



THE SPIRIT OF LABOR

As pictured in large painting on the walls of the offices of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

### "WAR AGAINST WAR"

THE HAGUE has been in the past a city of buried hopes for world peace. Ironically enough, its great Peace Palace shortly before the World War was erected by Carnegie, the Steel King—whose corporation makes the weapons with which hundreds of thousands have gone to slaughter.

This did not deter the International Federation of Trade Unions from making another try at a World Peace Conference in the Dutch capital. Six hundred delegates responded to the call—representatives of the Second and Second-and-a-Half Internationals, champions of "bourgeois" pacifism, Mensheviks from Russia and delegates from the Russian Trade Union Alliance. Neither the Communist nor the Red Trade Union International were invited. On the other hand, the American Federation of Labor refused to go, because of the inclusion in the "agenda" of the general strike.

Jouhaux, the French leader, aroused the conference with his appeal for real steps toward peace, and his reminder that the "World War was to have been the last war." His suggestion was to "organize peace." The conference in its resolutions declared for education of the rising generation in peace ideals, reformation of the League of Nations into a real league of peoples, abolition of secret treaties and secret diplomacy, control of private arms manufacturers by governments, recognition of Soviet Russia, and for the international general strike against war.

Karl Radek, the Russian Communist, who represented the Russian unions, ridicules the conference for its refusal to invite the Communists and the Red Trade Union International. He also thinks it significant that the workers of the French, Dutch and English colonies were not asked to participate.



## HOW EUROPE FARES

This interesting report of conditions in Europe has been written for LABOR AGE by PRINCE HOPKINS, who has spent six months studying conditions there.

**E**UROPE rallies here and there from the sickness in which the war has left her. Some doctors, seeing that she is not at this moment in an acute stage, spread encouraging reports. But the malady, formerly acute, has now really become chronic.

As a London physician recently said to me: "When you find a patient's liver and stomach covered with spots, and when, after a long period, one or more of these organs shows no disposition to recover, you don't go away and say, 'This man is only ill in a few places'."

Russia, Germany and the Balkans are not recovering. France, England, America, etc. all belong to the same system. In a few years the Europe of today will be swept away. In a few more, the disease probably will have made its way to America.

It is not a time for laying plans or establishing a reputation or making a fortune. By the time the foundation is laid with care, it will be necessary to build elsewhere entirely. It is the time to experience, to live, and to adapt oneself from moment to moment.

The war has undoubtedly left behind it a mental prostration as great as the physical. The fatigue brought on by the system of universal, compulsory year-after-year of unnatural life in the trenches seems to have gone beyond the point from which there can be recovery. If this only prevented the going back to old habits, it would not be so bad. But it also seems to interfere with anything constructive for the future.

The great weakness of the Italian labor movement, for example—which has been the weakness of all the other continental movements—has been lack of solidarity. The communist split has been in Italy rather fatal. Organization is not strong. To this, as much as to governmental cleverness, was due the small results from the occupation of factories two years ago. Also, the men had no fundamental ideas or program. It was, therefore, no surprise that they sold all that they had achieved for some slight immediate improvements.

The radical leaders, strangely enough, do not seem to find much good in the idea of doing away with the king. They feel that this would merely unchain a riot of ambitious men and self-seeking parties. In the melee, true revolutionary forces would fare worse than at present.

In Munich, the very first things we heard from the waiter were of the pitiful state of things in Germany, the black troops on the Rhine, the universal poverty. Then, he wound up with a long story of the wrongs done by the French, and with the words: "But you wait; we shall get back at them." This was the note we heard frequently. When the chance comes for Germany to join with some enemy of France, there will likely be civil war between the unthinking German nationalist element and the more enlightened and class-conscious workers, who see that war brings nothing but increased misery.

"Tell your people," were the parting words to me of the Social Democratic secretary in Munich, "that the fight for us is desperate. This winter thousands of the comrades will not be able even to feed themselves." In this everyone agrees. I was told at the Socialist headquarters in Cologne that it cost 15,000 marks a week to live in simple working class way, but that 5,000 marks per week was good wages. I remarked to one of the railroad baggage handlers: "I suppose your earnings are only about 5,000 marks per week?" His answer: "I get just 2,000."

In Belgium I found conditions very much better indeed. In Holland the workers have got about as much in increased wages as their living expenses have mounted—about 100 per cent in each case, they said.

Socialism and Catholicism are often blended in the Belgium worker, although the Catholic Church fights the Socialist creed. The Belgians are more inclined to take religion seriously than the French. We saw few signs of war's destruction in the Belgian country. In Holland religion also entered into political life pretty intimately. In addition to the socialist and communist parties, there are three "Christian" parties—Anti-Revolutionaries, the Christian Historical Party, and the Catholic Party. Queen Wilhelmina is personally very popular, but there is a decided wish for a republic among the city people. In the countryside, the monarchy is strongly supported and preferred.

How do the people in Europe feel about the way out? Professor Graham Wallas (the sociologist) told me, when I saw him in London, that he had just completed a tour of Europe recently, and confirmed what I found. It is, that everywhere doubt exists in the Socialist and Communist camps. Whereas, a few years ago all was confidence and clearness of vision! Just what is to come out of the chaos is being answered with a great question mark. No one is willing to predict. There is a feeling that economic dogma may be as unsafe to follow as any other kind of dogma. That is not only true of the masses, but of the men trying to think the problem out. It may be summed up in the words: "We do not see whither we are drifting."



## LABOR AGE

Russia herself has been making some moves at world disarmament. She has reduced her red army from 5,000,000 to 800,000 men, and promises to cut it still further—to 600,000. The conference held between the Soviet Government and her small adjacent countries in December fell through—largely because these countries would not

reduce. Immediately thereafter, Russia sent out an appeal to the workers of the world to do everything possible to bring about disarmament. She cited her own example, showing that she had actually reduced, not merely talked about it.

### WORKING FOR GUILDS

ONE of the hopeful things in the muddled European situation is the persistency of the Guild Movement. This movement means to secure workers' control of industry—largely through the building up of industries owned and controlled by the workers. It has been responsible for the English Building Guild, which began very auspiciously, but of late has run into financial difficulties. This has taught the Guildsmen most clearly the need for a close alliance with technical men and more centralized technical control.

That the English Guildsmen are by no means discouraged by this setback is shown by the springing up of guilds in other lines of industry, and by the recent National Guild Conference in London. This conference decided to form a National Guild Council. This council will take in hand the pushing of the Guild idea and will

assist guilds to do their work in an efficient and successful manner.

The London Conference was attended by more trade unions than have hitherto shown an interest in such guild gatherings, thirty-three in all. There were also thirty-five Guilds and Guild Committees represented. The onslaught on the English unions, which is in full swing now, undoubtedly has turned the attention of the unions more seriously to this method of combating the employers and getting control of their work. The nationwide drive on the unions is led by the British Federation of Industries, and it has taken the form of a demand for a longer work-day and a further cut in wages. A move in this direction in the building trades has been followed by similar attacks in the iron and wool industries. In woolen textiles, for example, the employers are trying to extend the 48-hour week to 55½ hours.

## BOOK NOTES

MODERN IMPERIALISM comes in for an interesting analysis in the recent booklet on that subject issued by the Plebs League (London). Its title is "**An Outline of Modern Imperialism**," and it is one of the series of popular "outlines" of different subjects being published by that enterprising group. The splendid thing about this effort is that each book of the series is written in a simple—and often a humorous and stirring—style.

For instance, in their new "**Outline of Economics**" they begin in this fashion: "Many sciences deal in 'news from the graveyard'. Economics certainly does not. Many sciences lead men far into the clouds. Economics brings them back to earth—to the workshop and the dinner table. It is not enough to think of the definition of Economics as 'the science of the production and distribution of wealth', without thinking of 'wealth' as really meaning the coats upon our backs and the boots upon our feet. Why did the tailor cut, the weaver weave, and the spinner spin? What explains why cotton and wool grown in other far away continents now serve a useful purpose as a jacket? Why did thousands of men act in concert thus? Economics answers all such questions as these."

It would be well for American Labor pamphleteers to study the methods of this group of their English brothers.

\* \* \*

THE League for Industrial Democracy is beginning a new and hopeful method of pamphleteering in this country. The second of these publications is Stuart Chase's "**The Challenge of Waste**." Mr. Chase's own clear grasp of the subject has enabled him to produce a very lucid account of where our national wealth goes. We, as a nation, have just enough annual income for everyone to enjoy the standard of living which our

own government bureau has declared to be the lowest consistent with health and decency. Then how is it that only a small percent of the people can actually so live? Mr. Chase's answer is that the labor of 13,000,000 men goes into producing harmful or useless things, that of 12,000,000 more is lost through bad technical methods and that of 5,000,000 more is lost through idleness, thus giving a ratio of 70 per cent waste of our total productive power of 42,000,000 laborers.

\* \* \*

HENRY FORD has become a national figure. Hailed as the "richest man in the world," he has had much written about him of late. Magazines have run biographies and autobiographies. Newspapers have contained the how and why of his career. It is not surprising, then, that we should now see "My Life and Work," written by him "in collaboration with Samuel Crowther." (Doubleday, Page & Co.)

There run through the book, particularly in the introduction, a number of those homely sayings which give an insight into the man. For instance he says: "The present system does not permit of the best service because it encourages every kind of waste—it keeps many men from getting the full return from service." And about war: "Today I am more opposed to war than ever I was, and I think the people of the world know—even if politicians do not—that war never settles anything." When it comes to the Jews and the unions, he is less convincing. His chapter on "Democracy and Industry" is the weakest in the book. His brief apology for his attack on the Jews impresses one as rather flimsy.

The interesting part of the book is the story of how he arrived at his inventions.



**WE BEG TO ANNOUNCE—**

**T**HAT LABOR AGE has moved to larger and more convenient quarters. The new address is EVENING TELEGRAM BUILDING, Seventh Avenue and 16th Street, New York.

Not being blessed with the staffs of many other publications, this move has caused havoc in our publication date—already upset by the Manager's midwestern trip.

Therefore—in order to catch up with the date on which we should come out—our next issue will be the APRIL issue instead of MARCH. It will come out on the 25th of March. All subscriptions will be moved up a month, so that subscribers will get their twelve copies per year.

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